



Rep. Waxman noted for healthcare legacy

By Elise Viebeck - 01/30/14 04:14 PM EST

House Energy and Commerce Ranking Member Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) received praise from public health advocates Thursday after announcing that he will retire at the end of this Congress.

Waxman has served 20 terms in the lower chamber and played a leading role in nearly every Democratic healthcare achievement during that period, including the Children's Health Insurance Program and the Affordable Care Act.

A major force behind food safety, nutrition labeling and anti-tobacco laws, Waxman was also responsible for a program expanding access to HIV/AIDS treatment for low-income patients and for a memorable 1994 hearing in which tobacco executives said cigarettes are not addictive.

John R. Seffrin, chief executive of the American Cancer Society and its advocacy arm, praised Waxman on Thursday as a "life-long advocate for public health" whose actions have helped to save the lives of "millions."

"Throughout his career, Rep. Waxman has been a peerless advocate for proven policies that reduce tobacco use, a champion for programs that improve public health, and an extraordinarily effective legislator," Seffrin said in a statement.

A handful of other groups, including the Association of American Medical Colleges, released similar statements lauding Waxman.

The California Democrat is the second longtime ally of House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) to announce his retirement this year. Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.) is also leaving after the conclusion of this Congress, he said earlier this month.

TAGS: Henry Waxman, Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

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